

To these Motives, amongst others; we undoubtedly must ascribe the strange Success of this Establishment, and the Liberality of our Benefactors, whose Examples in this Charity, it is the Duty of every one of us to transcribe, as we are able, mine particularly, under this Appointment, with all Honour to commemorate.

The first, whom I shall mention, after the Memory of our Royal Founder, always First in our Acknowledgments, is a^c Bishop, now with God, once himself the worthy President, and the first considerable Encourager of the Design of this Society.

None but a^d Brother of that good Prelate, so very like him in Disposition, superiour only in Ability, could go beyond him in this great Work, and make him Second in the Charity. He extended our

^c The Right Reverend Father in God, Francis Lord Bishop of Ely, who bequeath'd the Sum of one thousand two hundred Pounds to the Uses of this Charity.

^d The late very Reverend and Learned Dr. Thomas Turner President of Christ-Church College, who consecrated to this Charity a Sum amounting to no less than eighteen thousand Pounds.

Corpus Christi Oxon

Borders,

Borders; and carry'd on our Acquisitions, and by a Management unforeseen to the holy Man himself, and reserv'd to his wife's Executor, who so providentially conducted it, has made us in a literal Sense to possess the Gates of our Enemies, casting out the sworn Adversaries of our *Jerusalem* before us, and causing their Land to be divided to us for an Heritage.

Gen.
xxii. 17

Psal.
cxxxv.
12.

Acts
xiv. 17.

From the first Plantation of this Fraternity, God had not left it without a Witness of his Encouragement, in that he gave it Rain and fruitful Seasons, filling our Hearts with Food and Gladness. But the good Angel, whom we now commemorate, poured down upon us like a Torrent, filling all our empty Vessels at once, and in an Instant, to an Height which the wisest of us could never have presag'd, and which the most sanguine of our Well-wishers scarce

• The Estate of Stowe, purchas'd by the Reverend and Learned Mr. Chishul, Executor to the President, at upwards of sixteen thousand Pounds for the Uses of this Charity, was charg'd with a considerable Legacy to the Widows of dissenting Teachers.

ever

ever durst have hop'd for. He, like the ^{Job. iii.}
River of God, overflow'd all his Banks, ^{15.}
overflowing only that he might enrich. It
was accordingly found necessary, though at
the Expence of a 'Royal Labour, to en-
large the Channels, and cut open new Con-
veyances, for the Reception of this Cha-
rity.

And seeing that by this Enlargement we ^{Acts}
enjoy great Benefits, and that Room is ^{xxiv. 2.}
made for many worthy Deeds (one & gra-
ciously now vouchsafed) to be done to us
by this Privilege, we acknowledge it in all
Places, we accept it with all Thankful-
ness.

But in this Recital of Benefactors to the
Clergy of the Church of *England*, there is
one above the rest, whom give me leave to
mention: You know whom I mean, our
late gracious Sovereign Lady^h **QUEEN ANNE**,

^f The Powers of our Charter to purchase Lands to the Va-
lue of two thousand Pounds, enlarg'd to that of five thousand
Pounds per Ann. by his Majesty **KING GEORGE**.

^g His Majesty's late Bounty of five hundred Pounds to the
Uses of the Corporation.

^h **QUEEN ANNE**'s Bounty, amounting in Value to about
fifteen thousand Pounds per Annum.

of glorious and ever-blessed Memory: A Name ever sacred to Fame, and dear to *Englishmen*! Whom were I capable of forgetting, or should I forbear to mention, the Stones of this very Temple would call out upon me to commemorate: This Temple, where we now stand, not more the Theatre of her Triumphs, than the Monument of her Piety.

Hail! Princess, highly favour'd of thy God, whom thou now enjoyest, and of thy People, who will ever celebrate thee! Thy Life had already taught us, that nothing greater had gone before thee, and Posterity will every Day convince us, that nothing equal can come after thee. What was wanting to thy Person, we will be ever expiating to thy Memory; and wherever this Gospel is preach'd, as often as this grateful Anniversary shall be celebrated, this also, amongst thy other Deeds, which Thou hast done for thy poor Clergy, what Thou the best of Women, the greatest of *QUEENS* hast done, shall be told for a Memorial of Thee.

Mat.
xxvi.
23.

Blessings

Blessings, and Peace be on the Heart and Head, and much Glory to God for the sake of those, who have thus ministered unto the Saints, and yet do minister. *Sion* heard of it, and rejoic'd, the Daughter of *Judah* was glad, the Church of *England* triumph'd. Rejoice not, (was she heard to say) rejoice not any more against me, O mine Enemy: Talk no more so exceeding proudly, let not Arrogancy come out of your Mouth: Behold me, and the Children, whom God hath given me! No longer now in Sorrow shall I bring forth, nor multiply, as in former Days, to the Famine, and to the Sword: From henceforth all Generations shall call me blessed: The Number of my Children no longer dreadful to their Father, but formidable to his Adversaries: Blessed is the Man that hath his Quiver full of them; he shall not be ashamed when he speaketh with his Enemies in the Gate.

Psal.
xcvii.8

1 Sam.
ii. 3.

Isa.
viii.18.

Psal.
cxxvii.
5.

But here, my Beloved, give me leave to pause a while, on a Reflection that will give a Check to the Intemperance of our rejoicing.

36 *A Sermon preach'd before*

Rev. iii. rejoicing. Let not our holy Mother say too
17. securely within her self, I am rich and in-
creased in Goods, and have need of nothing;
not knowing that, even in this her Day, great
Numbers of her Children are wretched, and
miserable, and poor, and naked. Not a few
of them, we may observe, who join with
us in this Festivity, mingle silently their
Tears with the Sacrifices they assist at. Ma-
ny more are this Day absent from us, thro'
Shame or Fear, and the Nakedness of their
Condition, who were they all to come up,
and make a Part of this Assembly, we should
scarce discern the Noise of the Shout of Joy,
from the Noise of the Weeping of the People.

Ezra From the first Day of its Foundation, even
iii. 13. until now, hath this Fabrick been in build-
v. 16, ing, and yet it is not finished. God and
good Men have done great things for us al-
ready, and for these, as in Duty bound, we
do justly now rejoice; but still as much is
left unfinish'd, as our selves and our Poste-
Neh. v. rity shall be ever able to accomplish. We,
2. our Sons, and our Daughters are many: The
Work is great and large; let us not be se-
parated.

parated too far from one another. Whatever Distance we may keep from each other in smaller Matters, let us unite heartily in this great Work, and generously give up all our little Quarrels and Diffensions to the Service of God's Church, and the Advantages of the Common-wealth.

From the Plenteousness of our own Tables, let us send Portions to them for whom nothing is prepared. Let us visit our poor Brethren in Sicknes, and in Prison, saying unto the Priests, go forth, and to those that are in Darkness, come out, and shew yourselves. Let us go down unto those who lye fast bound in Misery and Iron, to bring them out of Darkness, and the Shadow of Death, and to break their Bonds in sunder.

And indeed when I call to mind the Zeal, the Riches, and the Charities of this great City, her known Affection to our Church, and her Liberality to its Ministers; How on every light Alarm of Danger, she trembles for the Ark of God, tottering sometimes through the Backslidings of the Levites who support it; when I consider the various Kinds of the Charities she excels in, so that Poverty is without Excuse, nor any Sicknes or Misfortune is left without a Remedy, I cannot

cannot doubt, I dare not question her Concurrency in this Service, and that as she abounds in every thing besides, so she will take care more especially to abound in this Grace also.

2 Cor.
viii. 7.

Less doubtless need be said to you, the Sons of Clergymen, to persuade you, on this good Occasion, to be ready to distribute, to be willing to communicate. Ye are the Children of the Prophets, and though anointed, through God's Blessing, with the Oil of Gladness above your Fellows, beholden many of you to this very Charity, which you once receiv'd your selves, and are now enabled, with more Pleasure, to communicate to others.

1 Tim.
vi. 18.

Acts
iii. 25.

Psal.
xlv. 7.

Lukewarmness towards this Charity, the least Backwardness to this good Work, unseemly only in others, would in you appear unnatural. Then are ye Bastards, and not Sons, if ye decline this Opportunity of shewing Piety at home, and ungratefully thus requite the good Providence which has so bless'd, and the Parents who begat you.

Heb.
xii. 8.

1 Tim.
v. 4.

Heb. iii.
1.

John
i.

Least of all, holy Brethren, Partakers of this heavenly Calling, to you, the last of all Men, should this Exhortation be directed. If we come unto our own, and our own receive us not, to whom then shall we repair?

JOHN 1

to

to whom shall we have the Confidence to apply for Succour?

Ye that religiously profess to preach Charity to others, can ye be suspected capable of wanting it towards your selves? Ye that do solemnly teach your Hearers to extend it to their Enemies, can ye refuse it your own Brethren? Can ye withhold it from their Children?

Better much will it become me, instead of pressing you to a due Concern for the Support of their Posterity, to call up into your Remembrance the Faith and the Patience of those who have gone before you. Remember, you received not from them the Spirit of Fear, of Dissimulation, of unjustifiable Compliance. 2 Tim. i. 2. The Zeal and the Courage of our Clergy are hereditary. 1 Kings xxi. 3. GOD forbid that we should part with the Inheritance of our Fathers, the only Inheritance (alas!) they have left to many of us.

Turn on every Side your flaming Swords, Gen. iii. 24. ye Angels of the most High GOD, to keep the Way of the Tree of Life: Protect his Truth from the Blasphemer, and his Altars from Profaneness.

Watch over the sacred Fire of Zeal and Loyalty, on which the Fate and Preservation of

of the Common-wealth depends, sent down to us from above, as the last Pledge of our Security, and by Heaven, from whence it came, committed to your Custody.

Jude
13.

Shine on in this lower World which you are appointed to direct, not shaping your Pursuits according to those wandring Stars, whom we observe, when they appear, with equal Horrour and Astonishment, uncertain in their Course, and malignant in their Influence, but steering steadily after the Father of Lights, in whom is no Variableness, nor Change, nor Shadow of turning; till advancing by just Degrees from Grace to Grace, and from Glory to Glory, ye come at last to be translated from these lesser Orbs below, to shine forth as the Sun in the Kingdom of your Father.

James
1. 17.

Mat.
xiii. 43.

To whom be Glory, &c.

F I N I S.

Quatuor Orationes habitæ in Sacello Coll. D. Joh. Evang. Cantab. Autore Pawlet St. John, A. B.

Concio ad Clerum habita in Templo Beatæ Mariæ, Cantab. Autore Pawlet St. John, S. T. P. Prostant apud W. & J. Innys.

7
A 694.9.15
6
S E R M O N

Preach'd before the

SONS of the CLERGY

AT

Their Anniversary-Meeting

IN THE

CATHEDRAL-CHURCH

OF

St. P A U L,

December 10, 1713.

By HENRY SACHEVERELL, D. D.
Rector of St. *Andrew's Holbourn.*

L O N D O N :

Printed for HENRY CLEMENTS at the *Half-Moon*
in St. Paul's Church-Yard, 1714.

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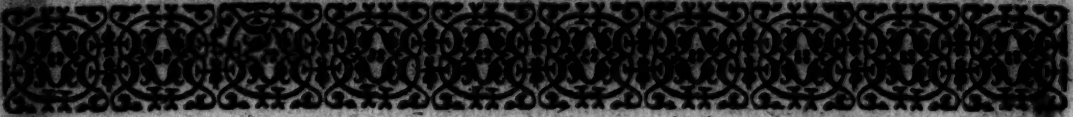
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Printed for HENRY CLIMENTS at the Half-Moon
in St. Pauls Church-Yard, 1714.



To the **WORSHIPFUL**

*Mr. George Richardson,
Mr. Robert Tate,
Mr. Henry Stockar,
Mr. John Beevor,
Dr. William Strahan,
Mr. William Hill,*

*Mr. Henry Anderson,
Mr. Christopher Topham,
Mr. Richard Wright,
Mr. Thomas Hackley,
Mr. Ralph Robinson,*

STEWARDS

For the late **FEAST** of the
SONS of the **CLERGY,**

T H I S

S E R M O N,

PREACH'D and **PRINTED**

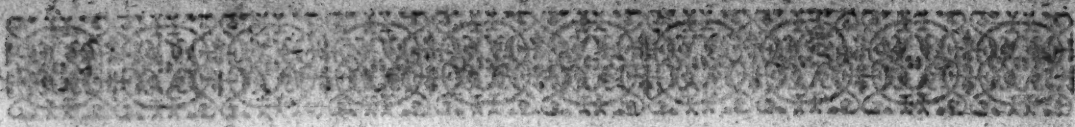
At Their Request,

Is Humbly DEDICATED

By their Affectionate and

Humble Servant,

Henry Sacheverell.



To the WORSHIPFUL

Mr. George Richardson,	Mr. Henry Andrus,
Mr. Robert Tate,	Mr. Christopher Johnson,
Mr. Henry Jackson,	Mr. Richard Williams,
Mr. John Brown,	Mr. Thomas Harker,
Dr. William Swanson,	Mr. Ralph Robinson,
Mr. William Hill,	

STEWARDS

For the late FEAST of the

SONS of the CLERGY.

THIS

SERMON

PREACHED AND PRINTED

At Their Request,

Is Humbly DEDICATED

By their Affectionate and

Humble Servant,

Henry Jackson.



I TIMOTHY V. 8.

If any provide not for his own, and especially those of his own House; he hath denied the Faith, and is worse than an Infidel.

WHEN the great Apostle of the Gentiles had constituted Timothy Bishop of Ephesus; that he might not be wanting in his Duty, or err in the Discharge of such an important Office, he sends him these Two Epistles, containing the full Extent of his Holy Commission, together with those Instructions, and Rules that were necessary for his Conduct in the Administration of it. In the First of which, having strictly enjoyn'd him to preserve the Christian Faith in its Purity, from the novel Corruptions of those erroneous Doctrines, that were already, or should be after-

wards spread in the Church; and having recommended that *Sacred Depositum* to his utmost Vigilance and Care, he proceeds to lay before him the Dignity of his *High Calling*, by drawing out his Character in all the several Marks, and Qualifications, whereby it was to be distinguished. From whence he might take the Measures of his future Life, and know how he ought to behave himself in the House of God, which is the Church of the living God, the Pillar and Ground of the Truth. And lest he should mistake in the Choice of such *Ecclesiastical Ministers*, as were necessary to assist him in so difficult and laborious an Employ; the Apostle subjoins a Catalogue of all those excellent Virtues, and Endowments, that were absolutely requisite to capacitate such as should be thought worthy of waiting at the Altar. In both which Characters it is observable that the *Marriage of Bishops and Priests* is not only suppos'd, and taken for granted, as a State of Life holy in itself, and lawfully consistent with those sacred Offices, since either of them is permitted to be the *Husband of one Wife*; but that their Profession might be guarded from any *Collateral*, or even *Relative* Imputation of Blame, the Apostle directs them in the very Choice of their *Wives*, that they must be suitable to such an Holy Alliance, grave, not Slanderers, sober, faithful in all things;

c.2. v. 15.

c. iii. 2.
and 12.

c.3. v. 11.

things; lest they should reflect a Disgrace upon their *Husbands*, and wound Religion through the Reputation of its Ministers. For the prudent Regulation of *their Families* would be a Matter that would carry great Weight and Influence with their Profelytes, by setting so many bright Examples of *Domestick Piety* to their Flocks, which they could not but endeavour to imitate, in the Practice of all the *Social Virtues*, when they thus saw their Light shine before Men, and glorify their Father which was in Heaven. Well therefore might the Apostle insist upon this great Duty of good Education in a Bishop, that he should be one that ruleth well his own House, having his Children in Subjection with all Gravity. For (as he excellently argues) ^{c. 3. v. 4. and 5.} if a Man know not how to rule his own House, how shall he take Care of the Church of God? A Man may, with the same Parity of Reason, take upon him to be a General, and lead an Army, that knows not how to command in the *Inferiour Offices* of Military Discipline. Shall he presume to preside over the *House of God*, that has not Skill and Experience sufficient to manage a single Room of it? Shall he sit at the Helm, and dictate to others, what he cannot practise himself, and pretend to controul the Passions of Men, that cannot subdue those of himself, or his Children? And if

8. 12.

in this *Superiour* Case the People will be apt to try the *Doctrine* by the *Teacher*, and to renounce the *Orthodoxy* of the *one* for the *Heterodox* Practice of the *other*; the Reasoning will doubtless hold as strong in the *Inferiour Pastors* of the Gospel, if they do not *rule their Children*, and *their own Houses well*, as they are commanded by the Apostle to do; and as 'twas highly necessary for them to do, to convince the World, that the Christian Religion was calculated for the universal Benefit of all Mankind, *Clergy*, as well as *Lay*; and that it was a Rule of Obedience that admitted of no Exception amongst any Rank or Order of Men whatsoever. From whence it may be undeniably coneluded, either that the Holy Ghost gave positive Rules and Instructions to the *Primitive Church*, which succeeding Ages could make void, and useless; or that the *Church of Rome* has in this Particular, by enjoining *Celibacy* on its Clergy, overturn'd the exprefs Laws of God, superseded his Authority, and has *oppos'd*, and *exalted herself above all that is called God*.

2 Thes.
ii. 4.

But to go on with this Argument, as a Matter of no little Weight and Consequence to the true Religion; the Apostle subjoins a Reason why pressing these Doctrines about *Marriage* was more immediately necessary for the then *Present*,

as.

as well as *Future* Circumstances, and Exigencies of the Church. For at this time (as some interpret the Place) the Prediction was fulfill'd in the Rise of a *Set of Hereticks*, which the great Deceiver of Mankind had rais'd up to debauch the Fundamental Principles of all Religion, and more especially to derive a Reproach on this *Holy Institution* of God himself, as *sinful*. Now ^{c. iv. 8.} the Spirit (says he) *speaketh expressly that in* ^{1, 2, 3.} *the latter times, some shall depart from the Faith, giving heed to seducing Spirits, and Doctrines of Devils: Speaking Lies in Hypocrisy, having their Conscience seared with an hot Iron; forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from Meats, which God hath created to be received with Thanksgiving, of them which believe, and know the Truth.* Learned Writers are very much divided about the Limitation of the Time of this Prophecy, as well as the *Particular Persons*, to whom it refers. But, with Submission, whether the *Latter Days* denote the *Dispensation of the Messiah*, upon the Abolition of the *Jewish Economy* (as some with good Authority contend) and so make it relate to the then *Present State* of the Church; or whether the Prophecy has a farther Aspect to more remote and distant Ages of it, and the Times of *Anti-Christ*, wherein these Heresies mention'd, were not only propagated and maintain'd by several *Profes-*
lytes,

lytes, but by a Set of *Professors*, form'd into a Body on the Institution of the *Monastical Order*, and so may refer to the great *Apostacy* of the *Church of Rome*, beginning some Hundreds of Years after Christ; I think is not material to dispute. Since 'tis vety usual for the *Prophetical Scriptures*, especially those which relate to the *Messiah*, to bear a double View; and if so, may be interpreted of *Both*, and be taken not only as a *Narration* of those false, and pernicious Doctrines, that were then broach'd in the Apostle's Days, but as a *Prediction* of their *future Increase*, and farther Propagation in the Church afterwards. For tho' 'tis evident that before the Destruction of *Jerusalem*, our Saviour foretold a great Apostacy should happen by *false Prophets*, and *false Christs*, expressly referr'd to by this Apostle, and by the *Author of the Epistle to the Hebrews*, which is particularly levell'd at it, and by *St. Jude*; and that their Character does entirely agree with what is mention'd here, as carrying on the Work of the Devil with all Deceit and Hypocrisy, with most profligate Lives, and seared Consciences, inveighing against *Marriage*, whereby they introduc'd the Practice of all Licentiousness, and Debauchery imaginable; yet this was but an *Infant State* of Lewdness and Impiety, in Comparison of that mighty Pitch, to which it was after-

2 Theff.
ii.

v. 17, 18,
19.

afterwards advanc'd. For as the learned Mr. Mede observes on this Place, the *Monastical Order* was no sooner instituted, but it introduc'd the *Adoration of Saints*, with the Forgery of *Relicks* and *Miracles*, with all the abominable *Idolatry* of the *Church of Rome*, which was then begun, and afterwards finish'd by Men of the same wicked Fraternity in that monstrous Absurdity of *Transubstantiation*. Thus did God permit them to fall from one Error to another. Such *Impurity of Life* must be almost the necessary Consequence of such *impure Doctrines*. And therefore it is no wonder to find so many *Historians* (which even some of their own Religion cannot conceal) drawing the Characters of some of their *Ecclesiasticks* in such Colours as are not fit to be represented. But, God be thanked, we have not so learned Christ. To take away all such abominable Reproaches upon Religion, and its Professors, who made the Offering of the Lord to stink; our Reformation, has among many other Roman Abuses, Superstitions, and Corruptions, discarded this to its Eternal Glory, (tho' cast still as a Reflection upon it by our Adversaries) whereby our Church has restor'd both her *Doctrines*, and her *Clergy* to their Primitive Purity and Sanctity; by teaching us, that *Marriage is Honourable in all Men, and the Bed Undefil'd*, ^{Heb. xiii. 4.}

of

of which Truth this Day's Assembly is so illustrious an Example.

After the Vindication of the *Matrimonial State* of the Clergy, and these Rules laid down for it in particular by the Apostle; he naturally descends in the next Chapter to treat concerning *Widows*, and their *Choice*, and *Maintenance* in the Church, whom he divides and distinguishes into two Sorts; either such as were to serve as *Deaconesses* in the Office of Baptism, and other sacred Matters in the *Primitive Church*, call'd *Πρεσβυτις* in *Titus*; or those who were left destitute of all Maintenance, and therefore to be reliev'd by Ecclesiastical Contributions. Such was the great Piety, and exemplary Charity of the First *Truly Christian Ages*; that they thought their whole Fortunes and Estates but a very cheap Purchase for the Knowledge of the Gospel, which they *sold and laid at the Apostles Feet*; as an humble Offering for a more invaluable Treasure, and as an *holy Bank* to supply all the Necessities of the Church. They look'd upon the Poverty of its *Professors*, and the Indigence of its *Members* as a Disgrace upon God, and Religion; and which therefore those who had any true Love, or Honour for either, were oblig'd to the utmost of their Power, to prevent; and which if they did not, they did, in effect, *deny the Faith, and were worse than Infidels.*

Acts iv.
34, 35.

Infidels. If any provide not for his own, &c.
Which Words I shall take in their most obvious,
and natural Sense, and shall treat upon them in
the following Method.

I. *First*, I shall consider the Great Duties en-
joyn'd in them, with their proper Measures and
Extent; according to the Phrase of the Apostle
here us'd, of *providing for our own; and especially*
those of our own House.

II. *Secondly*, I shall assign some particular Rea-
sons, why the Neglect of these Duties are in so
Emphatical a manner branded by the Apostle
with this malignant Character of *denying the*
Faith, and being worse than an Infidel.

III. *Thirdly*, I shall shew, how, according to
the Design of the Apostle in this Chapter, this
Doctrine of Charity is more *particularly* appli-
cable to the *Persons, the Widows, and the Chil-*
dren of the Clergy.

I And *First*, I am to consider the Great Duties
enjoyn'd in the Text, with their proper Mea-
sures, and Extent; according to the Phrase of
the Apostle here us'd of *providing for our own,*
and especially those of our own House.

To State which Matter justly, and to ascertain the Duty to its two proper, and different Objects specify'd; it will be necessary to distinguish betwixt them, and to shew what is here to be understood by the *οἱ ἰδίοι*, *our own*, and the *οἱ οἰκεῖοι*, *those of our own House*. For 'tis certain the Adverb *κατὰ*, does not only separate one from the other, but denotes a much greater Degree of Duty, and Charity, owing to the one, above the other. Some Writers have taken a great deal of Pains to confound their meaning, by References to *Philological Criticisms*, perfectly foreign to the Purpose; not considering that the Terms are to be explain'd in an *Hellenistical Way*, and that the Apostle compar'd with himself, is his own best Interpreter. It cannot be deny'd, but that where so Emphatical a Word as *κατὰ*, [especially] is us'd, that which follows it must be of a more restrain'd and limited Sense, than that which goes before it. The general Rule of this Charity is, that, *Every Man must provide for his own*; the particular Direction of the Rule, is, *but especially for those of his own House*. Now therefore by the *οἱ ἰδίοι*, *his own*, must be understood, that a Man is oblig'd to do all Acts of Charity; *προνοεῖν*, to take care for, or relieve the Wants of all those that stand any ways related to him, either in Blood, or Profession. First, those that are nearest, and next those in the several remote

remote Degrees of Affinity, in proportion to his Power. His own Children before any others, and his Family, Friends, and Countrymen before Strangers, and Foreigners. Thus far the *Laws* of Natural Religion oblige us. But then the *Laws* of Christianity carry this Duty to a much higher Pitch. There is a spiritual Alliance whereby we are all united as one Family, and as the Members of the Mystical Body of Christ; joyn'd by his Death, and cemented by his Blood, whereby we are all compacted, and enroll'd as Children of God, as Brethren, and Sons, and Heirs of the same Hope, and Promises, baptiz'd into the same Covenant, and Faith, redeemed by the same Saviour, and Mediator, sanctify'd by the same Holy Spirit, and aiming to the same heavenly Reward, and Glory; which are all Motives to raise our Charity to each other, to a more exalted, truly Christian, and Evangelical Degree, than Reason without Revelation could ever advance it. And this will appear, I conceive, to be the Sense of the *Law*, here mention'd, as those especially, to whom we are bound to exert our utmost Love, and Beneficence; if we compare this with a Parallel Passage of this Apostle in his Epistle to the Galatians; where, laying down the same Rule of Charity, he says, *As we have Opportunity, let us do Good unto all Men*, *Gal. vi. 10.* especially

especially unto those that are of the Household of Faith. Where the general Rule has the same Restriction, added to it, to express its full Meaning; That we ought to have an extraordinary, and peculiar Regard, in the Distribution of our Charity to the Household of Faith above all others. We are bound indeed, to the utmost of our Abilities to dispence our Liberality to all Men, but still to give these the Pre-eminence. Which brings me in the Second Place,

II. To assign some particular Reasons why the Neglect of these Duties is in so Emphatical a manner branded by the Apostle, with this malignant Character of *denying the Faith*, and being worse than an Infidel.

And first, on what Accounts the Neglect of this Duty may be charg'd with the heinous Guilt of *denying the Faith*. But here it is necessary to be premis'd, that by *denying the Faith*, is not to be understood, a positive, direct Renunciation of the Gospel, or an actual Apostacy from Christianity; but only a virtual, and consequential Denial of the Force and Obligation of its Precepts. There being such a Paradox, as the Apostle mentions in another Place, of a Christian having the Form of Godliness, and yet denying the Power thereof. A Man's Practice, indeed,

deed, ought to be the Comment upon his Creed; for his *Life* is the best *Evidence* of his *Principles*, and his *Faith* is always presum'd to be *shown* by his *Works*. Where therefore the one thus stands in Opposition to the other, and not only *contradicting*, but, as 'twere, *confuting* one another, the surest way to judge of such an *inconsistent* Person is, by comparing him with himself, the consequence of which, I must be to pronounce, that the Man holds the Faith in *Un-righteousness*, or else, that God is not in him of a *Truth*; and that all his pretended Professions are mere Hypocrisy, and empty Prevarication. Rom. i. 18. i Coa. xiv. 25. Either of which may very properly be call'd *denying the Faith*; for that in the Rules of Reasoning they do *Se mutua ponere & tollere*, either *suppose*, or *subvert* one another. This being pre-advertiz'd, it naturally suggests as its Consequence, *vi. non est boni agere ad bonum*. The first Reason on which this severe Charge is grounded, of *denying the Faith*, by the Omission of the great Duty enjoyn'd in the Text; namely, Because he contradicts; and as much as in him lies, evacuates the most indispensable and distinguishing Injunctions of the Christian Faith, who provides not for his own, and especially those of his own House. Not to provide for one's own Children, and Families, as far as it is in our Power, is undoubtedly a Sin against all the Obligations of *Natural*,

Natural, as well as Reveald Religion. The Charge indeed may not be so heavy in the other Instance here mention'd. But this is certain, that if it does not hold in so high a Degree, it will be however found to come near it in Proportion. For is it not the peculiar Character of the Christian Faith, whereby it stands so eminently distinguish'd above all other Religions in the World, to have carry'd the General Rule of Universal Charity to such an exalted Pitch, as all the Knowledge and Improvements, of *Mortality* could never before advance it to? *Nature*, and *Reason*, would have hardly taught us to forgive our Enemies; but not only to forgive, but to requite their Malice, and Injuries, with Kindness, and Friendship; nay with Prayers and Intercessions to God for them, was such a transcendent Act of Goodness, and Generosity, as none but the Son of God could reach, none practise but from his Example. Now if the Gospel enjoins us this extensive Charity, even to our Enemies; how much higher will the Obligations raise this Duty to our Friends, nay to our Brethren in the Faith, to the House, and Family of God, to the Mystical Body of Christ? The Obligation must always ascend in Proportion to the nearness of the Relation. *A New Commandment* (says our Saviour) *I give unto you, that ye love one*

John xiii.

v. 34. and

35.

John xiii.

one another; by this shall all Men know that ye
are my Disciples, if ye have Love one to ano-
ther. As much as to say, This is the Grand
Criterion, and Sovereign Badge of my Reli-
gion, whereby my Profelytes are distinguish-
ed above the whole World, and without
which no Man can pretend to be my Disci-
ple. And St. John says, agreeably to this,
Hereby perceive we the Love of God, because he
laid down his Life for us, and we ought to lay
down our Lives for the Brethren. But who so
hath this World's Good, and seeth his Brother
have need, and shutteth up his Bowels of Compassion
from him, how dwelleth the Love of God in Him?
And, if a Man say I love God, and loveth his
Brother, he is a Liar; for he that loveth not
his Brother, whom he hath seen, I how can he
love God, whom he hath not seen? And St. James
tells us, Pure Religion, and undefiled before God
and the Father is this, to visit the Fatherless and
Widows in their Affliction. From all which it
is evident, that if a Man should keep the whole
Law in all other Particulars, (as the rich, just
Man that came to our Saviour) and yet be de-
ficient in this one single Duty of Charity: He
may be said to deny the Faith in the highest,
and most important Article of it, and by no
means to lay Claim to the Title of a Christian.
It may be observ'd on this Story of the Rich
Man,

Ep. John
iii. 16, 17.

c. iv. 8.
20.

c. i. v. 27.

iii. 20.

Man, that upon our Saviour's unwelcom Doctrine, he never return'd to him again, and was not converted to Christianity, which proposed such hard Measures as a worldly Mind could never comply with. By which therefore he refus'd the Faith, and for any thing we hear farther of him, parted with the Gospel instead of his Riches, and (as others who have embraced the Faith do) deny'd it by his Uncharitableness. But here it may be objected, are not all other Sins equally a denying the Faith as well as this? being as much repugnant to the Doctrines of Christianity as this? And if so, how comes this peculiar Charge of Guilt to be appropriated to this Omission of Charity?

I answer, I grant it, all other Sins do virtually deny the Faith, but none in that eminent Degree as this does. Because God seems to lay such a particular Weight, and Stress upon this Duty above all others, as if it supposed a Man the most perfect Proficient in Piety to attain to it, and to which he is pleased to impute an extraordinary (and, if I may be allow'd so to speak, under Christ's Merits a kind of Expiatory) Quality and Reward, as that which shall cover a Multitude of Sins. This is therefore the Touchstone of Christianity, that distinguishes betwixt the Gold and precious Stones, Wood, Hay, and Stubble;

1 Cor. iii.

12.

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it is the *Wedding-Garment*, that is to qualify us for the *Felsh*, without which, whosoever is found, must expect to be excluded the *Kingdom of Heaven*, and cast out into *Outer Darkness*. Since therefore God is pleased to set such a Value on the Performance of this Duty which is so good, and acceptable before him, as to be esteemed the highest Demonstration of a *Christian's Faith*; the *Guilt* of its Neglect must doubtless rise in Proportion, and may very justly render us obnoxious to this severe Accusation of *denying the Faith*. Especially if we consider, *Secondly*, The peculiar Reason this Duty is grounded upon; that is the Relation of its Objects whom we are to provide for, not so much out of *natural Compassion*, as Men in Distress, upon a *Moral Account*; but as *Members of Christ's Body*, under an *Evangelical Alliance*; which is the only true Principle it is to proceed from, and terminate in. We must in their Miseries seem to contemplate our Redeemer himself suffering, and in his Name, and for his Sake, administer all the Succour and Relief, that so divine a Motive must command. For as the Apostle says in the most emphatical and express Words, *We are Members of his Body, of his Flesh, and of his Bones*. This is the true Love of Christ that constraineth us, *quasi inquit, ut non possidetis ac regit, ut ejus affluat*. *D* *quasi*

VER. 16M
22. 44. 3

Eph. v.

20.

2 Cor. v.

13.

Mat. xxv.
c. 42, &c.

quasi correpti agamus omnia, says Beza; a Metaphorical Allusion to Persons inspir'd, and actuated by a supernatural Impulse. Such a powerful Energy should this Principle have upon us, as to be irresistible, when we hear our Saviour appropriating all these Acts of Beneficence to his own Person: I was an hungred, and ye gave me Meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me Drink; I was a Stranger, and ye took me in; naked, and ye cloath'd me, I was sick, and ye visited me, I was in Prison, and ye came unto me. For verily I say unto you, inasmuch as you did it unto the least of these, ye did it unto me. If we believe this Doctrine, and yet act in Opposition to it, what can farther aggravate or enhance the Guilt of so dreadful a Sin? Which in effect is not only denying our Faith, but, almost with St. Peter, denying our very Saviour in Distress and Calamity. And certainly such an one is worse than an Infidel, which he would scorn to do to his Friend, upon a bare Principle of Reason and Honour. Which I come next to consider.

1. Secondly, To assign some Reasons why he that provides not for his family, and especially those of his own House, is worse than an Infidel. It is an horrible Charge upon a Christian to be said to deny his Faith; but to pronounce him worse than an Infidel, is to extinguish his Reason, to un-man him, and make him equal to the Beasts that

that perish. Nay the Apostle howsoever severe he may be thought in his Exaggeration of the great Guilt of this Sin, might have carry'd the *Climax* higher, and condemn'd the Man that is convict of it, even below the very *Brutal Part* of the Creation, as to the first Particular here mention'd, the providing for our Children, and Families. The bare Instinct of *Nature*, without *Reason*, has, even in the most *savage Animals*, implanted this Principle of maintaining their Offspring till they can provide for themselves. And we don't yet hear of any *Heathen Nations* that were so barbarous and cruel, as not to listen to this Universal Voice, and Eternal Law of Nature. The *Greeks*, and *Romans*, who indeed were very *civiliz'd Heathens*, carry'd their Rules of Philosophy in this Matter so high, that they fell little short of the Holy Scriptures. And their Systems of Morality always make the several *near*, or *remote Degrees of natural, or political Relation*, the Measures of *greater*, or *lesser Beneficence*, and the Neglect of it is by them reckon'd among the most heinous Crimes and Enormities against *Humanity*. So that a careless Christian in this Case even without an *Infidel* stands upon the Disadvantage in the Comparison, and is so much the more inexcusable, considering, that it comes not up to the Righteousness of

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III. Secondly,

2 Tim.
iii. 3.

Secondly, That the one does that in Obedience to the Law of mere Nature, which the other refuses to do, in Opposition to the joint Laws of Revelation, carrying the Obligations to a much higher Pitch: So that his Offence is against a double Light of Conviction, being not only an *isot* without natural Affection (which by St. Paul is rang'd among the most deadly Sins, and one of the Signs of the great Apostacy) but is wholly void of the true Love of Christ, and of that Holy Communion into which he is baptiz'd, and is therefore much worse than an Infidel. Which will appear,

3. Lastly, From the infinite Scandal and Reproach, that such a Man brings upon Religion in general, and the Church in particular. An Uncharitable Christian is such a Contradiction in Terms as never can be reconcil'd and Reason'd His Practice, and his Principles are so inconsistent, that the one stands eternally upbraiding, reviling, and subverting the other. Such a Man's Religion is vain; his Pretensions to it mere Hypocrisy, a Dishonour to God, a solemn Sham upon his Faith; the Sport of profane and Atheistical Men; a Stumbling Block to all those that are without the Church; and a Scandal upon all such as are within it: In short, his Righteousness is so far from exceeding, that it comes not up to the Righteousness of

of Jews and Pharisees; but is worse even than that of Turks, and Infidels. He professes that ^{Tit. i. 16} he knows God, but in Works he denies him, being abominable and disobedient, and unto every good Work reprobate. And he that thus denies Christ before Men, him will he deny before his Father which is in Heaven; where the very Heavens shall rise up in Judgment against him; and out of his own Mouth shall this wicked Servant be condemn'd: and it shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah, that never heard of God, or Christ, than for him who hath liv'd so openly in Defiance of the Commands of Both.

From these Reasons, I presume, it evidently appears, upon what sufficient Grounds the neglect of these Duties of providing for ones own, and especially those of our own House, is in so Emphatical a manner branded by the Apostle with this malignant Character of denying the Faith, and being worse than an Infidel. A terrible Charge indeed! and what I do not remember throughout the whole Scriptures to be ascrib'd to any other Sin; and therefore seems appropriated to This, to set out its peculiar, and prodigious Guilt and Blackness above all others; which should render us very cautious, how we fall under the least Imputation of It. I come now by way of Application,

III. Thirdly,

III. *Thirdly*, To shew how, according to the Design of the Apostle in this Chapter, this Doctrine of Charity is more particularly applicable to the *Persons, Widows, and Children of the Clergy*.

I. And *first*, as to the *Persons of the Clergy*. According to the Rule laid down here, next to our own Families, which are the immediate and indispensable Objects of our Care and Piety, They very justly claim the Precedence, as the *nearest Relations of Christ*, both in *Person*, and *Office*, as they are ordain'd and sent, as his Representatives here on Earth, the *Stewards of his holy Mysteries, Ambassadors in his Name*, to reconcile God to Man, and Men one to another, by the Covenant of Peace and Salvation, by unfolding its great Duties and Doctrines, exhibiting the propitiatory Sacrifice of the Cross, and continually praying for the Sins of the People. And surely such endearing Offices of the most divine Charity and Goodness should at least teach them to *know those who labour among them, and are over them in the Lord, to watch for their Souls, and admonish them, and to esteem them very highly in Love for their Works sake*. And therefore the Apostle just after my Text, adds an Injunction for their Provision and Maintenance, *Let the Elders that rule well, be accounted worthy of double*

1 Thess. v.

32, 13.

Heb. xiii.

17.

1. 17, 18.

ble Honour, especially they who labour in the Word and Doctrine. For the Scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the Ox that treadeth out the Corn; and the Labourer is worthy of his Reward. Double Honour importing not only the Regard and Veneration due to their Persons and Characters, but as the Greek Word *μαρ*, also signifies, a liberal Support and Subsistence for the painful, and expensive Discharge of the Ministry. What ample and splendid Provisions the Priesthood was allotted, even among the Heathen, wherever Learning and Humanity flourished, as in Egypt, Greece, and Italy, is a shame for Christians to consider. What Honours, Titles, Immunities, and Advantages the Priests were dignified with among the Jews, by the peculiar Designation of God, is too well known to be insisted upon; in Levi was the Glory of all other Tribes, and for whose sake alone the rest were blessed. Then if we proceed to Christianity; what Shifts and Hardships did the Primitive Christians run thro', to maintain the Apostles, and their Disciples, and Successors? And after the Empire became Christian, what large Emoluments, and Estates were fix'd on the Church! Such was the Piety of those Ages; Kings were its Nourishing Fathers, and Queens its Nourishing Mothers; no Provision was thought too Great for its Ministry. And such indeed were the flourishing Circumstances of the English Church; till those

those pious Frauds, the Monastick Foundations, robb'd it of its envied Revenues, and the Parochial Clergy were reduc'd by Impropropriations (only to feed those sacrilegious Nurseries of Sloth, Luxury, and Ignorance) to that wretched Condition of Poverty, which is the present Source of all their Misery; and which this venerable Assembly is this Day met in some measure to relieve, and to wipe off that Political Aspersions so unjustly cast by the Papists upon our Reformation, in permitting the Clergy to marry; from whence they say all the Burden and Reproach of our Church is to be dated. Could the Clergy of Rome blush at any thing, it would be asham'd to urge this Argument against us, did they know from whom they borrow'd it. That this was the Language of the old Hereticks, who call'd Marriage, the Doctrine of Devils, we are expressly told by Clemens of Alexandria in the third Book of his Stromata, in these remarkable Words

ὑποφύλασσις ἐστὶν τοῦ σατανᾶ, καὶ οὐκ ἐστὶν ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ. ὁ θεὸς οὐκ ἐποίησεν τὸν ἄνθρωπον ἵνα μὴ ἑσθῇ, ἀλλ' ἵνα ἰσχυρὸς ᾖ καὶ ἁγιός. ὁ θεὸς οὐκ ἐποίησεν τὸν ἄνθρωπον ἵνα μὴ ἑσθῇ, ἀλλ' ἵνα ἰσχυρὸς ᾖ καὶ ἁγιός. ὁ θεὸς οὐκ ἐποίησεν τὸν ἄνθρωπον ἵνα μὴ ἑσθῇ, ἀλλ' ἵνα ἰσχυρὸς ᾖ καὶ ἁγιός.

“Under a Pretence of Continence they commit
 “Sin against the Creation, and the Holy
 “Creator, who is the only Lord God Om-
 “nipotent: teaching that Men ought not to
 “receive Marriage, nor beget Children, nor
 “bring into the World others to be mis-
 “erable,

“ rable, nor furnish Death with Food and Nourishment.” As if it were not lawful for any Person to marry, unless he knew the Fate of his Posterity; or he ought not to trust God with the future Disposal of his Family. If this be not a Denial, or at least a most unchristian Distrust of Providence; I know not what can be call’d so. But however, allowing the *Papish* Church in this Instance to speak Truth, and that the Matter of Fact is so; that Poverty has ever since the Reformation, upon the Depredations then made on the Church, been the hard Lot of the Clergy, and that their Families on that account have been too frequently left in Want and Misery, to the Scandal of our Church, and Religion; we are not ashamed to own the sad Effect, when the Cause is so well known to the World. For be it spoken to our Honour, that tho’ the *Parochial* Clergy of the Church of England, is the worst provided for of any in *Europe* considering their Number; (six thousand whereof, as appear’d on our publick Accounts, the greater part of the whole, not enjoying one with another fifty Pounds a Year, many subsisting on ten, several under) yet with these dismal Discouragements, which no other Profession labours under, our Altar has never yet wanted its Attendants; and I will be bold to say, *such* (since our Adversaries *compel* us to speak in our Defence, and *magnify*

our Ministry) as have in the most illustrious manner advanc'd the *Glory of God*, and the *Service* of their *Country*. Nay, I hope, I may not be thought to flatter my own Order, if I should add, which is only doing them common Justice, that both our *Church*, and *State* has more than once ow'd their Safety, Protection, and Welfare to the Success, under God, of their learned and immortal Labours. Now considering the great Expences of their Education, the reputable, and liberal Ways in which they are brought up, the extended Friendships and Acquaintance they have in the World, the several Posts and Places of Preferment they are translated from, and serve in; the Burdens and Charges exacted from them upon their Admission into them; the Hospitality, and Charity, that is always requir'd from them (and I may say as generally given by them) the Inconveniencies which on these accounts they labour under in Marriages, and the numerous Issue that generally attends them; together with the Meanness of their Benefices, and those too heavily laden with Incumbrances, usually eating out the third Part of the Revenue; the length of Time, even before they come to their Possession; and the short Space that for the most part they can enjoy them; and the little Opportunity they have, stol'n out of the Circle of Labour, and Study, which they are necessarily engag'd in, to

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mind secular Affairs, and generally the Incapacity they have to manage them; and considering that this *little All*, is but a *Tenure for Life*, and how impossible it is to lay up for a Family out of such a slender Provision; I say, if we duly weigh all these Inconveniencies attending their sacred Function, did they not derive a particular and invisible Blessing of Providence upon their Posterity, I fear there would be a much greater Reason for this Complaint, than even *now* there appears to be. Hard indeed is their Lot to be traduc'd and upbraided on the one hand, for their *Misfortune*; and on the other, to be *envied*, and *malignd* even for those very poor Remains of ancient Piety that is scarce left the Church, by those that eat of her Bread, and yet *ungratefully* lift up their Heel against her. Could our Adversaries object, that either *Luxury*, or *Intemperance*, *Idleness*, or *Prodigality* were the criminal Causes of this Ecclesiastical Penury; our Mouths would be very justly stop'd. But let the Royal Founder of this pious Corporation speak in its behalf; who has been pleas'd to their Honour to specify in their Charter, the great Sufferings of the Clergy for their Loyalty to the Crown, and firm Adherence to its Cause, as one of the main Reasons of their indigent Families. But Her Present Gracious Majesty (whom this Society ought for ever solemnly to commemorate on this Day as its Greatest Patron and

Benefactress) has more than amply requited the dutiful Services which the Church owes, and is always ready to pay to the Crown, in that *Princely Bounty*, with which out of *Her Exemplary Piety*, and *Goodness*, She has so plentifully bless'd the poor Clergy. And may the Prayers of the Church, the only Return we can make our *Gracious Sovereign*, be heard for her Eternal Reward! Would but Her Subjects follow Her Glorious Example, the Cries of Orphans and Widows would cease, and we should have no complaining in our Streets. Which brings me, *Secondly*, To shew how according to the Design of the Apostle in this Chapter, this Doctrine of Charity is more particularly applicable to the *Widows* of the Clergy. If the Church in those Primitive Ages look'd upon themselves oblig'd more especially to provide for *Widows* in general, as their greatest Objects of Commiseration, I will presume to say, no *Century* since the writing of *this Epistle of St. Paul*, could shew in any Church, so many *Widows* in particular, that entirely fill'd the excellent and moving Character, requir'd of them in this Chapter, to recommend them to our Kindness and Favour. For these are doubtless *Widows* indeed, All of them bereav'd of the Comfort and Support of their *Husbands*, some of their *Children* that might supply the Loss of their *Fathers*, and many (which is the worst

worst Case of all) burthen'd with a number of Children, if possible, more destitute, and helpless than themselves. Certainly such miserable Creatures, may in the strictest Sense be said to be left *desolate*, *quite alone*, and stript of all Aid and Assistance, who have nothing left them to depend upon, but the Mercies of God, who is *the Father of the Fatherless*, and *Husband to the Widows*; in whom alone they ought to *trust*, as the sure Anchor of their Faith, and Hope, and *continue in Prayers and Supplications night and day*. Several of whom have formerly in their Prosperity liv'd decently in the World; and have probably supported some of those, to whom they are now become Suitors for the like Favour; who have been well reported of for good Works, have lodg'd Strangers, have wash'd the Saints Feet, have reliev'd the Afflicted, have diligently follow'd every good Work. With such the Apostle says expressly the Church is to be charg'd, as Widows indeed, the most pressing Objects of Charity in the whole World. As Women generally well descended, and bred up in an ingenious Education, upon whom Poverty sits hard; many of them being incapable of any servile Employment, and most of them disabl'd by Sickness, Infirmities, or Old Age; and to whom 'tis no little Aggravation of their Sufferings to be compell'd with modest Reluctancy to make their

Condi-

Stobaeus,
p. 448.

Conditions known. We should be so far from
 enhancing the Sorrow of such afflicted Persons,
 that we should double our Charity by giving be-
 fore it is asked. An certain *Greek Writers* in-
 forms us, that it was a wise Custom in the Go-
 vernment of *Samos* to provide for the Mothers
 of those that were slain in the Wars, by making
 them over, and charging them upon the rich-
 er Citizens to be maintain'd; to encourage o-
 thers to die bravely in the Service and De-
 fence of their Country. How much more Rea-
 son is there for the *sad Relicts* of those, who
 have spent their whole Lives and Fortunes in
 the *Christian Warfare*, that have fought a good
 Fight, and finish'd their Course, to be consider'd
 with respect to the Merits of their *Husbands*,
 who tho' dead yet speak, in a double Sense, in
 the *Wants* of their Families, and in their *success-
 ful Labours* of the Gospel, which to the Glory
 of God, and the Edification of the Church,
 still survive them. Thus their great Master,
 whom they follow'd, having almost comple-
 ted the Great Work of the Salvation of Mankind,
 being ready to expire on the Cross, commits his
 Mother to the Care and Maintainance of his Be-
 loved Disciple, with these endearing Words, *Be-
 hold thy Mother*; and 'tis recorded to his Honour,
 he cheerfully receiv'd the *Holy Charge*, and from
 that hour took her to his own Home. It would be
 doubtless

John x.
27.

doubtless a mighty Encouragement to the Pains and Studies of the poor Clergy to be guarded against the Fears of entailing Misery and Distress upon their Posterity; and could they thus recommend their Families to the Favour and Protection of their Friends, they might meet their last Hour with more Comfort, and Satisfaction. But the terrifying Thoughts of the contrary must create a greater, tho' a shorter, Perplexity in them upon the Agonies of approaching Death, than it leaves upon their disconsolate Widows, and Orphans for their future Lives. Which leads me, in the

3. Last Place, To consider how the Apostles Doctrine of Charity, here laid down, is most highly applicable to the Children of the Clergy. They are left in so forlorn and destitute a Condition, that the naked Representation of it, needs not the additional Force of Rhetorick to persuade your Pity. If Youth, Virtue, and Innocence, in the utmost Peril and Disaster, be reav'd not only of the Comforts, but even the necessary Subsistence of Life, expos'd to all the Temptations and Snares of Gripping Want, torn from the Advantages of a liberal Education, and the Hopes of their Paternal Care and Instruction, into Contempt and Wretchedness, abandon'd, friendless, undone, without every thing but God in the World, can provoke, command,

nay extort your Compassion; if you have any
Bowels of Mercies, they cannot but yearn on these
 deplorable Objects. To be cruel and relentless
 to such, we must not only break through all
 the Laws of God, but dissolve the very Ties,
 and fundamental Obligations of Nature, and de-
 generate into the Barbarity of Savages. Can we
 hear our Saviour's emphatical Promise, that
*whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these lit-
 tle ones, a Cup of cold Water only in the Name of*
a Disciple, (or as St. Mark) because they belong
to Christ, verily he shall in no wise lose his Re-
ward, and not believe, that as that small Bene-
 faction to them shall not pass unregarded in the
 Sight of God, and greater be proportionably re-
 warded; so the Neglect of our Love and Com-
 passion towards them is as heinously detestable a
 Sin, and will be as dreadfully punish'd: For who-
 soever shall receive one such little Child in my Name
 (saith Christ) receiveth me. But whose shall of-
 fend one of these little ones, which believe in me,
 it were better for him that a Millstone were hang'd
 about his Neck, and that he were drown'd in the
 Depth of the Sea. For tho' the Word Offend is
 by our Saviour, and his Apostles in other Places
 us'd to signify the giving Occasion of Sin to others;
 and that Signification may not even here be ex-
 cluded; yet it appears from the Connexion of
 the Discourse; and the Opinion of the best Ex-
 positors,

Mat. x.
42.

Mark ix.
41.

Mat.
xviii. 5,
&c.

John

positors, that in the *first* and *principal* Sense, Offend in this Verse is oppos'd to Receive in the former; and signifies either *positive injuring*, or *negligent slighting*, and disregarding, that is, not *relieving* and *encouraging*. Now he may be more especially said to *deny the Faith*, who can see the *Righteous forsaken*, and the *Seed of the Faithful begging their Bread*; by whose successful Labours the Faith it self was spread and propagated in the World: And to whom it can no way express its Gratitude for that infinite Good they have done to the Souls of Men, but by requiting it in their Posterity. Especially considering, that this is all the Portion they could leave them of their Posthumous Fame, Hereditary Merit, and Communicated Virtues. This Obligation lies in common upon all Men, but with *double Weight* on the *Sons of the Clergy*, and with *more than double* on *Clergymen*, and even with more still on *those Clergymen* who are *so* lineally descended. For they, by being uncharitable in this Particular, deny their Parentage, renounce the divine Stem, from whence they sprung, and derive a Disgrace upon their holy Progenitors: They are Ba-
Rom. ii.
stards, and not Sons, and *shew the Nature of the*
17.
Wild Olive, ingrafted on the true Stock. In this they do not only apostatize in effect from their Baptism; but are worse even than *Infidels*, who

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always took Care of their Priests and all that related to them.

But I hope in God there is no need of this Reflection. Far be it from me to suppose there is any Person in this Numerous, and Venerable Assembly, met together with a pious Resolution to take off this Blemish, and Reproach from our Church and Religion; but who is come with a Liberal Hand, and a most affectionate Heart, to contribute towards a Design, upon which the Credit of our *Reformation* does in some measure stand. For you, my Brethren, *who are the Children of the Prophets, and of the Covenant which God made with our Fathers*, are in your selves the best visible and living Confutation of this Objection against it. In whom we see with Joy the various Fortunes of the *Sons of the Clergy*, and the several gracious Dispensations of God's Providence, and Blessings upon them: Such as perhaps no other Profession in the World is honour'd with; as if God was resolv'd to distinguish his own *Inheritance* by the peculiar Marks of his Favour. Nay I might add, from whence *all other Professions* in a great measure receive their Support and Honour; as appears from this compounded Body drawn out of Church and State, City and Country, the Court and the Camp, the Nobility and the Gentry,

Acts iii.
25.

Gentry, the Magistracy and the Law, the Universities and Faculties, the Shops and Exchanges; who all repair to this Holy Temple, (like the Jews from all Quarters of the World to Jerusalem) to celebrate our Lineage, and to return our solemn Thanks to God for it on this *Anniversary Festival*. Which cannot be better express'd than in a bountiful and generous Administration to the Wants of those who are of the same Extraction with us; being the best Acknowledgment you can make for the tender Care and pious Education you receiv'd from your Parents; the best Requital for the Provisions your Families have receiv'd out of the Church; to both which, under God, with your own Industry, all your Wealth, and Happiness, and Prosperity in the World is owing; and upon which also perhaps your future Fortune and Success may be in a great measure depending. Let not therefore, I beseech you in the Name of Christ, any Greatness, Power, or Riches set you *above* your Birth; but rather boast of it as the Principal Source from whence they flow'd. Be not ashamed to ascribe it to the distant Merit of your Progenitors, for whose Sakes these Blessings may be deriv'd on your Heads: For when *the just Man walketh in his Integrity, his Children are blessed after him; and* Prov. xx. 7. as God *visits the Iniquity of the Fathers upon the* Exod. xx. 5.

Ifai. li.
p. 2,

Prov.
xvii. 6.

Heb. iii.
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Heb. iv.
15.

Children unto the third and fourth Generation of them that hate him, so he shews Mercy unto thousands of them that love him, and keep his Commandments. Look therefore (my Brethren!) unto the Rock whence ye are hewen, and to the Hole of the Pit, whence ye are digged! Look unto Abraham your Father, and Sarah that bare you! For I called him alone, says God, and blessed him, and increased him. The Jews so much valued themselves upon their Genealogies, that St. Paul himself admitted it as a Plea of Boasting, and urg'd it in his own Defence. Now if the Glory of Children are their Fathers, and they thought it so high an Honour to descend from the Levitical Priesthood, much Greater is it to be ally'd to the Ministers of a better Covenant; and to trace up our Pedegree to the Head and Founder of it, Christ Jesus the Father of our Order. Wherefore, Holy Brethren, Partakers of the Heavenly Calling, consider the Apostle and High-Priest of our Profession Christ Jesus. Consider that we have not an High-Priest, which cannot be touch'd with the Feeling of our Infirmities, but was in all Points tempted as we are, yet without Sin. Consider what he did and suffer'd in the Propagation of the Gospel; what Contradiction of Sinners he underwent: and we shall think all the Labours and Difficulties, Discouragements and Reproaches that we meet with

with in the Discharge of our Ministry nothing, whilst we have the Comfort of promoting the Salvation of Mankind: *We should rejoice that* Acts v. *we are accounted worthy to suffer Shame for his* 41. *Name. Seeing then that we have a Great High* Heb. iv. *Priest that is passed into the Heavens; Jesus the* 14. *Son of God, let us hold fast our Profession, and adorn both That, and our sacred Alliance with a more than ordinary and exemplary Holiness, which becometh our House for ever. Let us not presume to call Christ our Father, as the Jews did Abraham, and not do the Works that he did. Let us consider that our Obligations rise in proportion to our Stations; and that as we are set on an Hill, like burning and shining Lights in the midst of a crooked and perverse Generation, the least blemish will be visible in us, when search'd by such malicious and inquisitive Eyes, and improv'd to eclipse our Lustre. But if I should observe, (I hope it will be without Offence) that there are some things that more particularly reflect a disgrace upon our Profession, Order, and Extraction; Such as betraying or misrepresenting the Doctrines and Articles of our Church; debasing or confounding our Orders; giving up any of the Rights, or Privileges belonging to them alone; prostituting them to the Usurpation, and sacrilegious Hands of the Laity; sowing Pillows* Ezek. xlii. 18. *under their Armholes to hunt Souls; indulging, flatting,*

flattering, and soothing them in the most detestable Sins, *Heresy*, *Schism*, and the worst of Hypocrisy; caressing their Patrons and Advocates, out of a false Notion of Charity and Moderation, and siding with Sectaries of all sorts against the Interest of the Church; favouring, if not maintaining Principles of Sedition, Faction, and Disloyalty; *speaking Evil of those Dignities* that God has set over us; and infusing groundless Jealousies and Fears into the People, and insinuating *Popery* on the best establish'd Church, and Government in the World. These and many other things I could mention (but that I forbear to sully the Joy of this Day) are Sins of such a scarlet Dye, such Contradictions to our holy Office, and most sacred Oaths, as are enough to blast our Pedigree, taint our Family, and revile the Ashes of our Orthodox Progenitors. Such spurious Offsprings (be there any such) we abhor and renounce, *they are not of Israel, who pretend to be of Israel*; and let them put on never so sanctify'd an *Habit*, our Saviour has pronounc'd them *false Prophets*, and *ravening Wolves in Sheeps cloathing*; they would be the blackest *Spots* in these our *Feasts of Charity*, wherein we hope they will never be found to our Reproach.

In a Word, whatever little *popular Differences* may arise in the *House of Levi*, however they may
(in

(in this Sense different from that in which the Words were spoken) *be divided in Jacob, and scatter'd in Israel*, it is to be hop'd, in this Great Festival of Charity, that we shall *all meet and unite in the House of God as Friends*; sacrifice all our private Emulations, and disagreeing Sentiments to the Publick Good of this Church and Nation; and both Laity and Clergy heartily concur in zealously promoting the most pious Ends of this good Day's Assembly. A Day that is *acceptable to God*, and detestable to our Enemies; and which there is no one pretending to be our Friend but must wish well to; unless such as unnaturally *hide themselves from their own Flesh*. Isai. lviii.
For this Charity is in Strictness of Speech *providing for our own, and especially those of our own House*; those that are united to us by the most endearing Obligations of *Nature and Grace*; as the nearest Relations, and immediate Members of *Christ's Body*; as the *distinguish'd Sons of the Church of England*, and the genuine Product of the *Reformation*; to which all *True Church Men* will contribute, and whom none but a *Papist*, or a *very bad Protestant* would discourage.

Let us all therefore offer up our Prayers to Almighty God, that out of his infinite Mercy he would vouchsafe to prosper the good Designs of this charitable Corporation, that they may
be

be able to answer all the great Ends of their Establishment; that He that *cannot be Unrighteous, may never forget this Work and Labour of Love, which is shewed towards his Name, in that ye have ministered unto the Saints, and yet do minister.*

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*P 380.
A 34.
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